invention is illustrated. The clamp coagulator 120 is preferably attached to and removed from the acoustic assembly 80 as a unit. The proximal end of the clamp coagulator 120 preferably acoustically couples to the distal surface 95 of the acoustic assembly 80 as shown in Figure 1. It will be recognized that the clamp coagulator 120 may be coupled to the acoustic assembly 80 by any suitable means.

The clamp coagulator 120 preferably includes an instrument housing 130, and an elongated member 150. The elongated member 150 can be selectively rotated with respect to the instrument housing 130 as further described below. The instrument housing 130 includes a pivoting handle portion 136, and a fixed handle 132A and 132B coupled to a left shroud 134 and a right shroud 138 respectively.

The right shroud 138 is adapted to snap fit on the left shroud 134. The right shroud 138 is preferably coupled to the left shroud 134 by a plurality of inwardly facing prongs 70 formed on the right shroud 138. The plurality of prongs 70 are arranged for engagement in corresponding holes or apertures 140, which are formed in the left shroud 134. When the left shroud 134 is attached to the right shroud 138, a cavity is formed therebetween to accommodate various components, such as an inner or indexing mechanism 255 as further described below.

The left shroud 134, and the right shroud 138 of the clamp coagulator 120 are preferably fabricated from polycarbonate. It is contemplated that these components may be made from any suitable material without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

Indexing mechanism 255 is disposed in the cavity of the instrument housing 130. The indexing mechanism 255 is preferably coupled or attached on inner tube 170 to translate movement of the handle portion 136 to linear motion of the inner tube 170 to open and close the clamp arm assembly 300. When the pivoting handle portion 136 is moved toward the fixed handle portion 130, the indexing mechanism 255 slides the inner tube 170 rearwardly to pivot the clamp arm

assembly 300 into a closed position. The movement of the pivoting handle portion 136 in the opposite direction slides the indexing mechanism 255 to displace the inner tube 170 in the opposite direction, i.e., forwardly, and hence pivot the clamp arm assembly 300 into its open position.

The indexing mechanism 255 also provides a ratcheting mechanism to allow the elongated member 150 to rotate about its longitudinal axis relative to instrument housing 130. The rotation of the elongated member 150 enables the clamp arm assembly 300 to be turned to a selected or desired angular position. The indexing mechanism 255 preferably includes a tubular collar 260 and yoke 280.

The tubular collar 260 of the indexing mechanism 255 is preferably snapped onto the proximal end of the inner tube 170 and keyed into opposing openings 168. The tubular collar 260 is preferably fabricated from polyetherimide. It is contemplated that the tubular collar 260 may be constructed from any suitable material.

Tubular collar 260 is shown in greater detail in Figures 11 through 13. The tubular collar 260 preferably includes an enlarged section 262, and a bore 266 extending therethrough. The enlarged section 262 preferably includes a ring 272 formed around the periphery of the tubular collar 260 to form groove 268. The groove 268 has a plurality of detents or teeth 269 for retaining the elongated member 150 in different rotational positions as the elongated member 150 is rotated about its longitudinal axis. Preferably, the groove 268 has twelve ratchet teeth to allow the elongated portion to be rotated in twelve equal angular increments of approximately 30 degrees. It is contemplated that the tubular collar 260 may have any number of teeth-like members. It will be recognized that the teeth-like members may be disposed on any suitable part of the tubular collar 260 without departing from the scope and spirit of the present invention.

Referring back now to Figures 2 through 4, the pivoting handle portion 136 includes a thumb loop 142, a first hole 124 and a second hole 126. A pivot pin 153 is disposed through first hole 124 of handle portion 136 to pivot as shown by arrow 121 in Figure 3. As thumb loop 142 of pivoting handle portion 136 is moved in the direction of arrow 121, away from instrument housing 130, a link 128 applies a forward force to yoke 280, causing yoke 280 to move forward. Link 128 is connected to pivoting handle portion 136 by a pin 129, and link 128 is connected to base 284 by a pin 127.

Referring back now to Figure 2, yoke 280 generally includes a holding or supporting member 282 and a base 284. The supporting member 282 is preferably semi-circular and has a pair of opposing pawls 286 that extend inwardly to engage with the teeth 269 of the tubular collar 260. It is contemplated that the pawls 286 may be disposed on any suitable part of the yoke 280 for engagement with the teeth 269 of the tubular collar 260 without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. It will also be recognized that the yoke 280 may have any number of ratchet arms.

Yoke 280 is shown in greater detail in Figures 19 through 22. The pivoting handle portion 136 preferably is partially disposed in a slot 147 of the base 284 of the yoke 280. The base 284 also includes a base opening 287, an actuator travel stop 290, and a base pin-hole 288. The pivot pin 153 is disposed through the base opening 287. Yoke 280 pawls 286 transfer opening force to inner tube 170 through tubular collar 260, resulting in the opening of clamp arm assembly 300.

The yoke 280 of the clamp coagulator 120 is preferably fabricated from polycarbonate. The yoke 280 may also be made from a variety of materials including other plastics, such as ABS, NYLON, or polyetherimide. It is contemplated that the yoke 280 may be constructed from any suitable material without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.